

Immigrant Integration in Canada:

Policy Objectives, Program Delivery and Challenges

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Chapter One: Integration Policy Objectives

Defining Integration

There are two extremes on a continuum to describe the participation of newcomers in society. One such position encourages *assimilation*, meaning that it is primarily up to the newcomer to adjust and adapt, if necessary, by abandoning any cultural differences, in order to fit into the new society. The other encourages *segregation*, meaning that newcomers are separated or marginalized from society and denied equal access to its institutions and entitlements.

Canada, however, favours *integration*, which encourages a process of mutual adjustment by both newcomers and society. Newcomers are expected to understand and respect basic Canadian values, and Canadians are expected to understand and respect the cultural differences newcomers bring to Canada. Rather than expecting newcomers to abandon their own cultural heritage, the emphasis is on finding ways to integrate differences in a pluralistic society.

Integration is a gradual process that requires an active commitment from both newcomers and the receiving society. Much depends on the individual's own motivation and aspirations but integration is a two-way process that requires accommodations and adjustments on both sides. The ability of immigrants to contribute to Canada depends not only on the personal characteristics, knowledge, skills, experience, and traditions that they bring with them, but also on the social and economic conditions they encounter upon arrival. Many newcomers require assistance in adapting to a new and changing environment. Our collective ability to provide them with essential settlement and integration services will have an impact on our ability to sustain immigration through our absorptive capacity.

Historical Context

The Federal Government of Canada has delivered basic settlement assistance to newcomers to Canada since the 1970s. Settlement assistance is one of the main activities of the Immigration program. The Settlement Service was established in 1948 placing federal settlement officers throughout the country to help families of Canadian soldiers and war refugees adjust to life in Canada. Prior to World War II, settlement of immigrants was left to those responsible for bringing them to Canada, such as the Canadian National Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway and the Hudson Bay Company, and to voluntary agencies and the immigrants themselves. In 1966, with the creation of the new Department of Manpower and Immigration, the Settlement Service was disbanded and the federal government withdrew from being actively involved in the

settlement needs of immigrants. Instead, the prevailing philosophy was that immigrants should turn to existing, mainstream services available to all Canadian for their settlement needs. With the influx of the Indochinese refugee movement the mandate for operation of federal settlement programs and services was reaffirmed. In 1974, grants to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were initiated under the new Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), which continues today.

Prior to 1990, language training was provided under the auspices first of the Adult Occupational Training (AOT) Act of 1967, and subsequently, the National Training Act of 1982. This legislation permitted adult immigrants destined to the labour market to obtain training in one of Canada's official languages. In 1986, the Settlement Language Training Program (SLTP) was introduced as a pilot program. SLTP funded non-governmental organizations to provide up to 500 hours of basic language training to adults not destined to the labour market, primarily immigrant women. This program was designed mainly to provide language skills that would assist immigrants in coping with everyday life. SLTP was made permanent in 1989. Approximately 10% of the national budget for language training was allocated to SLTP, and 90% was allocated to labour market oriented language training. Language programs were delivered for the most part through the direct purchase of seats in provincially approved institutions.

Additionally, the Host Program was launched as a pilot project in March of 1984. It was originally designed to further enhance the settlement process of government assisted refugees and designated persons who qualified for support under the then Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP), now known as the Refugee Assistance Program (RAP), an income support program for refugees. The Program rationale developed from discussions at a Symposium on Refugee Sponsorship in 1984 attended by sponsors as well as representatives from non-governmental organizations, church groups, and federal and provincial governments.

Stakeholders wanted to explore the possibility of setting up “host families” from local groups or families willing to assist refugees, but without the financial means to privately sponsor refugees. The objective was to improve settlement opportunities for government-assisted refugees in comparison to that afforded to privately sponsored refugees. It was proposed that the personal support and friendship provided by the host groups would assist the refugees to settle more quickly, perform better in language training classes, and obtain employment sooner, thus reducing normal AAP contributions in the long run.

Federal Immigrant Integration Strategy

With the introduction of the *Federal Immigrant Integration Strategy* in the fall of 1990 as part of the five-year *Immigration Plan*, however, overall integration of newcomers to Canada became a central focus in Canada's immigration policy. Consultations leading up to the 1991-95 *Immigration Plan* revealed that, while there was

widespread support for immigration across Canada, this support depended on effective programs to help immigrants integrate into Canadian society. Many people expressed concerns about the need to ensure that newcomers to Canada can participate fully in the social, cultural and economic life of their new home.

The *Strategy*, consequently, introduced a broader view of immigrant integration than had been used before. A specific program change that were introduced, for instance, was the creation of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program. LINC replaced SLTP and some components of the labour market language training programs, broadened eligibility to all adult immigrants regardless of whether or not they were destined for the labour market, and increased the amount of funding available for language training overall. The Host Program was also made permanent and expanded to include all classes of newcomers, both immigrants and refugees. Additionally, funding for the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program was increased and eligibility for service providers to deliver the program was extended across a broader range of community organizations and non-profit groups in order to provide enriched services to a broader immigrant base. With the introduction of the *Strategy* in 1990, the reception services that exist today were also introduced as pilot-projects at major entry points in Canada.

The Federal Immigrant Integration Strategy placed a new emphasis on helping immigrants to learn about Canadian values and on helping Canadians understand the diverse backgrounds of newcomers, by making additional resources available for existing programs and introducing new initiatives. In this broader view, integration is a continuum. It is a process that begins when an immigrant first applies, and a refugee is first selected, to come to Canada, and it continues in the early days and months after arrival, up to and beyond the time he or she acquires citizenship and achieves full participation in Canadian society.

Understood in this way, integration involves more than helping a newcomer find a job and a place to live. It involves helping newcomers adapt to and understand the values and customs of their adopted society, how our social institutions work, and their rights and obligations. At the same time, Canadian society itself must grow and evolve, as it absorbs new people and cultures and adapts to their needs. Integration is, therefore, a two-way street that requires respect and tolerance on both sides. Successful integration for a newcomer to Canada is about the ability to contribute free of barriers, to every dimension of Canadian life - economic, social, cultural and political. The framework provided for in the *Federal Immigrant Integration Strategy* of 1990 recognized that achieving that objective is a complex, ongoing, and in some cases, a long-term process, involving accommodation and adjustment on the part of both newcomers and Canadians.

Chapter Two: Settlement and Integration Programs and Services

Policy Framework

The Canadian model of settlement and integration program service delivery aims to enable newcomers to adapt, settle and integrate into Canadian society as quickly and comfortably as possible so that they may become contributing members of Canadian society. Programs therefore encompass both pre and post-arrival settlement and orientation services abroad and in Canada. These programs are delivered in partnership with volunteer organizations right from the time of a newcomer's application or selection abroad, reception and initial settlement, and continuing through until Canadian Citizenship is granted.

Settlement programs and services are integral features of the Immigration Program in that they follow as a natural consequence of the decision to admit someone to Canada as an immigrant or refugee. Immigrants and refugees are granted permanent resident status for various reasons, but all are expected to become contributing, law-abiding Canadian citizens. An overwhelming majority of newcomers do become Canadian citizens once eligible -- approximately 85%. Accordingly, Settlement programs provide initial bridging mechanisms to assist newcomers in early initial adjustment and in accessing services available to all Canadians. Settlement programs and services also promote an acceptance of immigrants by Canadians. In essence, they are a counterpoint to enforcement, thereby fulfilling the complementary objectives of the Immigration Act -- the protection of Canadian sovereignty and the realization of socioeconomic benefits to Canada.

The policy underpinnings on which the settlement programs rest include the following principles:

- Integration is a two-way process that involves commitment on the part of newcomers to adapt to life in Canada and on the part of Canadians to adapt to new people and cultures.
- The ability of newcomers to communicate in one of Canada's official languages is key to integration.
- The contributions of newcomers to the economic and social fabric of Canada are valued. It is important for newcomers to become financially self-sufficient and be able to participate in the social dimensions of life in Canada. It is important for members of communities in Canada to help ensure that newcomers have opportunities to participate in and contribute to all the positive aspects of Canadian life.

Immigrant Integration in Canada

- It is important to share with newcomers the principles, traditions, and values that are inherent in Canadian society such as freedom, equality, and participatory democracy.
- Settlement and integration services will be directed at assisting newcomers to become self-sufficient as soon as possible. Priority will be given to those facing significant barriers to integration and who are deemed most in need within the community.
- Settlement and integration services across the country will be flexible, responsive, and reasonably comparable.

Client Eligibility

To be eligible for settlement programs or services the recipient must be either a permanent resident of Canada, or have been granted permission to remain in Canada, or have been selected for immigration to Canada and to whom it is the intent of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada to grant landed immigrant status.

With respect to the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), eligible clients also include non-immigrant live-in caregiver workers in Canada who may subsequently apply for permanent resident status from within Canada. Additionally, only adult immigrants are eligible for language training, as the education of children is a provincial responsibility in Canada.

Citizens are not eligible for language training under CIC's settlement programs and services since. A basic working ability in one of Canada's official languages is a prerequisite for granting of citizenship, and training available through LINC is generally sufficient to bring participants to a high enough level to enable them to meet language requirements for citizenship.

Refugee claimants are also not eligible for any settlement services provided by the federal government. However, they are allowed access to medical coverage (federal) and public assistance (provincial). Canada also allows claimants to seek work permits pending determination of their claims. Once a positive determination is made and claimants are conferred with convention refugee status by the Immigrant and Refugee Board, these refugees may access all Settlement programs and services, with the exception of income support available through the Resettlement Assistance Program.

Current Programs

The ability of immigrants and refugees to integrate into a new society is directly affected both by how well newcomers are prepared and informed about life in their new community and how well the receiving community is prepared and informed about the culture, history and experiences of newcomers to Canada. Orientation materials and programs are, hence, critical to the integration success of immigrants and refugees, particularly in the initial settlement period.

Canadian Orientation Abroad

A recent CIC initiative Canadian Orientation Abroad (COA) offers sessions in select areas to immigrants and refugees selected overseas for permanent residence status before their departure for Canada. Facilitators who speak the language of the participants provide future immigrants with some familiarity with life in Canada before their arrival. With a more realistic view of life in Canada, immigrants are better prepared to face the initial demands of adaptation and settlement.

COA has been gradually implemented since 1998, when Language Instruction to Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Overseas was discontinued, with its first year of full operation in early 1999. An evaluation of LINC Overseas indicated that prospective immigrants would benefit greatly from more in-depth pre-departure orientation. Additionally, because COA offers sessions in the participants' native language the messages are better understood and as such more people are affected through COA than previously with LINC Overseas. Places are limited in COA, however, and are awarded, in order of priority, to refugees, then independent immigrants and finally to members of the family class. Child minding, snacks, transportation subsidies and flexible scheduling of sessions encourage the participation of women, children and families in general.

Orientation is given in one, three and five day sessions, in the participants' native languages. It is intended to prepare future immigrants to come to Canada with realistic views and to help them cope with initial settlement needs. Topics include: Introduction to Canada, Transit, Culture Shock, Employment, Rights and Responsibilities, Climate, Finding a Place to Live, Living in a Multicultural Society, Cost of Living, Social Welfare, Family Life, Communications, Education and Adjusting to Canada. Additionally, facilitators introduce promotional materials from official language minority communities, when covering the topic of official language rights and responsibilities.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) delivers COA for CIC. Locations are determined in consultation with the Canadian missions, and take into account the countries that produce a high volume of immigrants. New locations may come on stream and others may be discontinued, depending on the greatest need and the resources available. At present, however, even though we deal with 200,000 people coming to Canada yearly, in the 1999-2000 fiscal period, only 8, 200 received COA training.

Recent reports from IOM indicate that by the end of the orientation sessions, some participants are better prepared for their departures, have a better understanding of Canadian realities, recognize the importance of skill in official languages and know something about job hunting.

Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program

The Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) provides funds to businesses, non-profit corporations, non-governmental organizations, community groups, educational institutions at the individual and community levels, and provincial, territorial or municipal governments to deliver direct and essential services to newcomers. Settlement workers help newcomers with the initial adjustments of day-to-day living. Newcomers also receive information concerning Canadian values and their rights and obligations under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

There are two types of ISAP projects. ISAP Stream B projects provide indirect services and must contribute to improving the delivery of overall settlement services to newcomers to Canada. Some examples of Stream B projects are conferences and seminars, publications and newsletters, audio-visuals, performing and visual arts activities, research, and training. ISAP Stream A provides essential, direct services to newcomers to Canada. These services include:

Reception: Immigrants are greeted upon arrival at the Port of Entry and provided with a Welcome to Canada kit that includes valuable information to help newcomers begin to get settled.

Referral: Newcomers are referred to various resources in the community which relate to economic, social, health, cultural, educational and recreational facilities in Canada. A worker from the SPO may accompany the client to the community resource, if necessary.

Orientation: Newcomers are assisted with such aspects of daily life as: public transportation; banking; day-care and babysitting; school registration; shopping for food and clothing; budgeting; nutrition and food preparation; household management; safety; housing, especially dealing with landlords and utility companies; etc. This includes an introduction to the local community to provide them with a sense of belonging to the new community, and information concerning their rights and obligations.

Interpretation and Translation: Interpreters are available to assist immigrants and refugees in their day-to-day activities and in accessing services prior to their becoming functional in English or French. Translation services are available for documents relating to employment, health, education and legal matters.

Para-Professional Counselling: Non-therapeutic services (identifying needs, determining how to meet those needs and helping the newcomer get help) are available to immigrants and refugees having difficulties adjusting to life in Canada.

Employment-Related Services: These services include assistance in obtaining required certification of education and/or trade documents, and job finding clubs that hold sessions on intensive job search techniques, including résumé writing, interview skills and use of the telephone.

Host Program

The Host Program funds the recruitment, training, matching, co-ordination, and monitoring of volunteers (individuals or groups) who help newcomers to adapt, settle and to integrate into Canadian life. The Program is designed to help newcomers overcome the stress of moving to a new country by matching newcomers with a friend or group of individuals who are familiar with life in Canada. Host volunteers help newcomers to learn about available services, practice their language skills, develop contacts in their employment field, and participate in community activities. In turn, Hosts learn about other cultures.

To be eligible to receive funding for the purpose of providing Host services, the recipient must be a business, a non-profit corporation, a non-governmental organization, a community group, an educational institution (school boards, districts and divisions), an individual, a provincial, territorial or a municipal government.

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

The Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program provides basic training to adult immigrants in one of Canada's official languages. Every effort is made to ensure newcomers' ease of participation by offering LINC classes right in the communities on a full-time or part-time basis, daytime or evening, and by allowing newcomers to access the Program at anytime within their first 3 years in Canada. In many cases, if needed, child-minding services can also be provided and transportation costs covered.

The LINC curriculum incorporates orientation information that will assist immigrants to function independently in educational, social and employment settings by incorporating themes such as Canadian culture and society, community and volunteerism, global issues such as hunger, human rights, and Canadian laws and Citizenship. Simulation of real life situations is used as much as possible to facilitate functional learning.

Canadian Center for Language Benchmarks

In 1992, the Government of Canada decided there was a need for a set of language-proficiency descriptors that could be used across Canada to indicate acquisition of Canada's official languages by newcomers who spoke other languages. Developed through a national-provincial partnership, the Canadian Language Benchmarks Working Document was released in 1996, and in 1998, a non profit organization with board governance, the Center for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB), was set up to promote and further develop the Benchmarks. After cross Canada consultation, the Working Document was revised resulting in the Canadian Language Benchmarks 200 edition, ESL Literacy Benchmarks, and the Guide to Implementation. These resources have been developed and produced through partnerships between the CCLB, provinces and the federal government. CIC has membership on the CCLB board of directors, and collaborates with the CCLB on an ongoing basis to further meet the needs of learners and provide tools for ESL teachers.

Canadian Language Benchmarks

The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) is a set of national standards or reference points for ESL programming by which to describe and assess a person's ability to use the English or French language to accomplish a set of tasks. The CLB are valuable in that they provide information to learners on what they have learned and what they have yet to learn. The CLB also provide a clear statement of a person's language ability to administrators, teachers, employers, and settlement workers. They are a set of reference points that is accepted nationally for use in assessing a learner's language abilities, and they provide a common basis for assessment of both learners and institutions offering ESL. The CLB provide standards so that each ESL school's certificates will have meaning beyond just that school and so that credits can be transferred from one school to another or from ESL to regular classes.

CLB contains twelve Benchmarks for each of the four language skill areas – Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Each Benchmark describes the competencies the learner should demonstrate at that Benchmark. Real life tasks are used as examples of what learners at that level can accomplish. The twelve Benchmarks are divided into “stages”. The first or “Basic” stage incorporates Benchmarks one to four. At this stage, students are expected to be able to communicate in predictable contexts related to basic needs, common everyday activities and situations of immediate personal relevance. At the second, or “Intermediate” stage, Benchmarks five to eight are encompassed. Students should be able to function in a wider variety of contexts. They should be able to function independently in most familiar life situations within day-to-day social, educational and work-related contexts and have attained professional and academic readiness.

Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment

The Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment (CBLA) is the nationally recognized standard for determination of adults' proficiency in English as a Second Language. The CLBA was developed to address diagnostic assessment and language training placement needs of second language learners in Canada. It is a task-based assessment which allows second language learners to demonstrate their proficiency in Listening/Speaking, Reading and Writing skills by means of a variety of functional tasks which are reflective of language use in domestic, working and community life.

Programs and Services for Refugees

The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) provides financial support to government-assisted refugees for up to one year after arrival, or until the refugee becomes self-supporting, whichever comes first. RAP clients are also eligible for assistance under LINC, ISAP and Host. These government-assisted refugees have been accepted outside Canada. Funding is also provided to service provider organizations for Reception Houses, temporary accommodation for government assisted refugees upon their immediate arrival in Canada.

Other components of the Resettlement Program that are targeted at refugees include the Private Sponsorship Program, in which Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH), often groups of five individuals or more in a community, commit to providing financial assistance to a sponsored refugee for up to two years. The Joint Assistance Program provides income support for cases requiring extra settlement assistance, such as torture victims, and the Women At Risk Program aims to address the special needs of vulnerable refugee women.

Orientation Materials

Canadian Orientation begins with Visa officers in Missions abroad where upon the guide "A Newcomer's Introduction to Canada" is distributed at the time a visa is issued. An information kit entitled, "Welcome to Canada: What You Should Know" is provided to each adult immigrant, on arrival, at the major ports of entry. The kit is also available on the Internet in Chinese, Punjabi, Russian and Arabic. It is an essential tool that directs newcomers to sources of information such as the phone book and maps. The kit includes information on the use of voice mail, payphones, emergency phone numbers, computers, mail services, public transportation, taxation, Canadian laws, Canadian money, and banking. It explains how to apply for identity documents such as social insurance and health cards, how to find housing and employment, how to register children in schools, and how to become a Canadian citizen. It also provides contact-information for immigrant and refugee serving organizations across Canada, as well as information on the Federal Government's settlement programs.

Additionally, CIC provides cultural profiles of the various source countries from where newcomers arrive to Canada to community organisations, and we have also established two on-line clearinghouses for newcomers and those providing settlement services to newcomers. Integration.net is a website maintained by national headquarters, and Settlement.org is a website targeted more at newcomer clients that has been developed and is maintained by CIC Ontario region.

Integration and Citizenship Promotion

Integration promotion programs help to orient receiving communities by creating a welcoming environment for immigrants and refugees. Promotion campaigns such as “Canada, We all Belong” and the “Citizine” youth oriented website highlight the contributions of immigration to the future of Canada and emphasize citizenship and inclusion values to fight prejudice and racism. The “Welcome Home” Campaign encourages children to create messages of welcome for newcomers receiving their Canadian Citizenship. Additionally, CIC holds activities during Citizenship Week each year that promote values of inclusion, and the Citation for Citizenship Awards are also held each year to honor individuals across the country who have made a significant contribution to promoting integration of new Canadians in Canadian society. Integration Promotion activities present Canadians and newcomers with positive messaging about the benefits of immigration and the contributions that newcomers make to Canada, in order to foster an environment where immigrants and refugees can feel that they are welcome and belong.

Chapter Three: Partnerships and Collaboration

Federal Responsibilities

Overall integration of newcomers is a federal responsibility and is one of the stated objectives of the *Immigration Act* that recognises, "the need to encourage and facilitate the adaptation of persons who have been granted admission as permanent residents to Canadian society by promoting co-operation between the Government of Canada and other levels of government and non-governmental agencies in Canada".

Although a shared responsibility, the actual services provided often fall under the jurisdiction of the provincial authorities in combination with the local municipal authorities. While different immigrant and refugee groups often have very different needs, they all rely on the health, education and other social services that provincial, territorial and municipal governments deliver to all members of society. Newcomers also have special needs for language training and other integration services -- services that have been funded, to a great extent, by the federal government. Both orders of government share an interest in ensuring that newcomers get the services they need to integrate successfully, and that these services are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible.

As such, partnership with all levels of government, and with the private and voluntary sectors, is essential to achieve effective results in the integration of newcomers to Canada. Additionally, the work of community-based immigrant and refugee-serving organizations has proven invaluable in assisting newcomers with their immediate and ongoing settlement needs. These organizations are sensitive to the needs of the local community as well as to the diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences that recent immigrants and refugees bring to Canada.

Newcomers settle in communities, and decisions on precisely what settlement services are required are, therefore, made at the community level. Local officials and community members are in the best position to determine the integration needs of the newcomers in that particular community, where services should be located, and to ensure that services complement and do not duplicate those already available in the community. Additionally, services are managed and delivered so that there is accountability based on results, cost-effectiveness, local flexibility to meet the integration needs of the mix of immigrants that settle in any particular area, and community involvement and participation.

Role of the Settlement Sector

CIC has a long history with our voluntary sector partners, and collaboration with community-based organizations, individual practitioners and volunteers has been a keystone to delivery of our mandate and services. We have over 400 federal contribution agreements with some 312 service delivery organizations and practitioners in the immigrant and refugee settlement sector and partners with thousands of community-based volunteers to deliver both private sponsorship and settlement programs and services. These relationships have been critical to our settlement programs. In fact, the success of the Canadian approach to integration can be attributed to a large extent to the extensive network of local service delivery partners. In many cases, service provider organizations and settlement practitioners have the tools and flexibility to provide a wide range of services tailored to local needs.

The community-based immigrant and refugee settlement sector is composed of agencies, individual practitioners and volunteers working towards the common goal of helping to settle newcomers to Canada either through refugee sponsorships or by providing direct essential services. Volunteers play a key role in supporting the efforts of agencies to promote the rapid settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada, whether through volunteer programs, board participation or ongoing outreach in local communities. Additionally, through the private sponsorship program, volunteers contribute many hours as Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) working to assist newcomers in their communities by providing social support networks in addition to fundraising to financially sponsor refugees.

Intergovernmental Context

Section 95 of the Constitution Act, 1867, assigns concurrent legislative authority over immigration to the federal and provincial orders of government, while making federal legislation paramount. Canada's immigration policy is based on the premise that immigration contributes to our economy and society and that the federal, provincial and territorial governments have a shared responsibility to manage immigration in the public interest.

Following extensive consultations with stakeholders in 1995 and 1996, discussions with the provinces and a study by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, CIC made an offer in 1997 to realign settlement administration and federal funding to the provinces and territories. This initiative, called "Settlement Renewal", was born out of the realization that settlement programming would appropriately belong with provincial/territorial governments, as they are in the best position to identify local needs and already hold responsibility for related areas of social policy such as health, social services and education.

CIC signed Settlement Realignment (SR) Agreements with British Columbia (May 1998) and Manitoba (June 1998), in which those provinces have assumed full responsibility for the design and delivery of settlement and integration programs and services for newcomers to Canada. Only the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP), an income support program for refugees, is administered in those provinces federally. Under the Canada-Québec Accord (1991), the provincial government delivers settlement programs in Québec.¹ Additionally, in Alberta, there exists a co-management structure between the province and the CIC. This structure is based on joint federal and provincial funding and decision-making regarding ISAP under an arrangement known as the Integrated Services Program (ISP).

In the rest of Canada, however, CIC continues to administer the delivery of settlement services. CIC also maintains an enduring federal role in the settlement realignment provinces to ensure that services are comparable across the country by consulting with provincial ministries on a regular basis and including their service delivery organisations in any national initiatives.

Regardless of whether or not provinces have signed realignment agreements with CIC, all provinces play a critical role in the integration of newcomers, as previously mentioned by the clear links between newcomer integration and provincial social policy. Provincial involvement in the area of newcomer integration means better service co-ordination and in some cases, more services. As such, CIC is committed to working with its provincial partners on a number of fronts.

In the past few years, we have made efforts to enhance intergovernmental co-operation on a range of issues. CIC has created a number of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Groups in the areas of integration, research and levels planning in order for officials to share information and research to improve program management. The Working Group on Integration and Settlement was created in 1999 with a mandate to promote the exchange of information and co-operation between the federal and provincial governments, and it has met regularly to explore issues of mutual interest.

Interdepartmental Context

CIC also works closely with other federal government departments on crosscutting horizontal issues. CIC is involved in a number of interdepartmental working groups to address issues and explore opportunities for interventions relating to youth-at-risk, discrimination, research on immigrants and labour market issues, the voluntary-sector and health.

¹ Under the terms of the Canada-Québec Accord, Québec is also responsible for determining its own immigration levels, for establishing its own selection criteria for independent immigrants, and for selecting all independent immigrants and refugees abroad who are destined to Québec.

Chapter Four: Program Administration

Fiscal Context

Each year Parliament approves resources for each federal department and agency. Within the department of Citizenship and Immigration, there are three categories under which expenditures can be made: operating expenditures, capital expenditures and grants and contributions. The majority of Canada's settlement funding is directed to grants and contributions.² \$322 million³ is allocated to settlement programs and administered by CIC and the provinces. Of this amount, approximately 70% is allocated for basic language training. Other services include refugee resettlement and assistance and social integration and adaptation for all immigrants.⁴

Delivery Structure

With the exception of Settlement Realignment (SR) provinces and the province of Québec, settlement contribution programs and services are delivered through a network of CIC regional offices, Immigration offices, community organisations, educational institutions and the private sector. Each year, the national funding allotted for settlement activities is allocated to regions, and the allocation model follows the distribution patterns of recent arrivals to Canada. Regional and local settlement officials are then responsible for the allocation of funds for LINC, ISAP and Host, in their respective communities, as they are in the best position to determine the available community services and local immigrant needs.

Officials assess requests for funding from community organisations based upon factors such as the projected level of immigrants to the various communities within a province, the composition of immigrants, the type and degree of needs for settlement services and existing infrastructure prior to making final decisions on approval of funding. Regions frequently hold consultations with community representatives, including immigrant-serving organisations and immigrants themselves, to identify

² Grants are unconditional transfer payments that are not subject to being accounted for or audited but for which eligibility and entitlement may be verified. Contributions are conditional transfer payments for a specified purpose that are subject to being accounted for and audited to ensure that funds have been used in accordance with legislative or program requirements.

³ Canada-Québec Accord, LINC, ISAP, Host and realignment agreements, Canadian Orientation Abroad, ISAP B National Projects, RAP, and IOM memberships.

⁴ It should be noted that these are direct costs. There is no estimate of the total cost (both direct and indirect) of integrating immigrants and refugees who come to Canada each year. Within the federal government, numerous departments and agencies manage programs relating to immigrants and refugees, including CIC, Canadian Heritage, the Canadian International Development Agency, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Health, Human Resources Development, Justice, the Solicitor General, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Additionally, immigrants and refugees use social, educational and health services, which are under provincial jurisdiction.

newcomers' needs and gaps in programming so that program priorities can be established. On behalf of Canada, CIC regional offices sign contribution agreements⁵ with third parties (Service Provider Organisations) that deliver services to newcomers.

Authorities

Settlement contribution programs function under the requirements and provisions of the Immigration Act, Treasury Board Guidelines on Financial Administration, the Financial Administration Act, and Terms and Conditions for individual settlement programs. Settlement program terms and conditions are amended as needed by means of a Treasury Board Submission prepared by the Settlement Division, Integration Branch at CIC.

The appropriate authorities in the Immigration Act are:

- Section 3(d), "It is hereby declared that Canadian immigration policy and the rules and regulations made under this Act shall be designed and administered in such a manner as to promote the domestic and international interests of Canada recognizing the need: ... to encourage and facilitate the adaptation of persons who have been granted admission as permanent residents to Canadian society by promoting cooperation between the Government of Canada and other levels of government and non-governmental agencies in Canada with respect thereto;" and,
- Section 108(1), "The Minister shall consult with the provinces respecting the measures to be undertaken to facilitate the adaptation of permanent residents to Canadian society and the pattern of immigrant settlement in Canada in relation to regional demographic requirements."

Reporting to Parliament

The Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada reports to Parliament through numerous mechanisms. However, two primary means, are through the annual tabling of the *Report on Plans and Priorities* and the *Departmental Performance Report*.

The *Report on Plans and Priorities* (RPP) plays a vital role in communicating our plans and priorities, and is the Department's primary strategic level planning document intended for Parliamentary and public scrutiny. It portrays the Department's mandate, plans and priorities and sets out strategies for achieving expected key results. The document is tabled in the spring before March 31 and is considered part of the estimates.

⁵ Contributions are payments made to an individual or group, according to an agreement outlining the responsibilities of both parties, as reimbursement for services provided. Contribution payments are subject to accountability, and activities and finances are monitored to ensure compliance with the terms of the agreement.

The *Departmental Performance Report* (DPR) provides a focus on results-based accountability by reporting on accomplishments achieved against the performance expectations and results commitments as set out in the department's *Report on Plans and Priorities*.

Chapter Five: The Benefits of Immigration

Economic Impacts

The macro-economic impacts of immigration have been widely studied. However, since most models cannot distinguish the economic characteristics and behaviours of immigrants from those of the Canadian-born, macro-economic studies are effectively examining the impacts of population increases rather than the impacts of immigration levels per se. As a result, almost all studies conclude that immigration produces a small, but positive, net economic benefit to Canada over the long term. Studies of the macro-economic effects of immigration in the United States and Australia have reached similar conclusions.

Some of the economic benefits of immigration include a larger domestic market of consumers, a stable supply of skilled workers, and inflows of financial and human capital. Immigrants also represent a steady source of new demand for housing and for durable goods, and have provided needed stimulus to certain sectors of the economy in recent years. In addition, there is growing anecdotal evidence that business immigrants are developing niche markets and that highly skilled immigrants are heavily in demand in certain industries such as high-tech.

It is difficult to assess the impact of immigration on employment. Studies in the 1980s found that a steady stream of immigration, whether low or high, would not, in and of itself, cause unemployment. On the contrary, many immigrants became net job creators over the medium to long-term. In the 1990s, research has tended to focus less on the impacts of immigration on the employment opportunities of Canadians or on specific segments of the labour market, and more on the economic performance of immigrants themselves. While the unemployment rate of recently arrived immigrants is higher than the Canadian average, it decreases over time.⁶

Social Impacts

Immigrants contribute to Canada socially as well as economically. One measure of the social integration of newcomers is their desire to become full participants as citizens. Although Canadian citizenship confers many rights and privileges, it also requires some fluency in an official language and some knowledge of Canada's history, geography, laws, institutions, and culture. At the time of the 1996 Census, 83% of immigrants eligible to apply for citizenship had become Canadian citizens.

⁶ At arrival, immigrants earn less than the average Canadian does. However, their economic performance improves rapidly through the initial years after arrival and, after 10-14 years, immigrants catch-up to or surpass the Canadian employment earnings average (based on 1980s arrivals).

Data drawn from the "National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating" also shows that immigrants are actively contributing to Canadian society in tangible ways. In 1997, some 85.8% of landed immigrants, aged 15 and over, made either financial or in-kind donations to charitable or non-profit organizations. Some 21.9% of landed immigrants volunteered their time, energy, and abilities to charitable and community organizations. Some 46.1% of landed immigrants contributed to the civic life of their communities by being members of or attending meetings of voluntary associations. These included work-related organizations like unions and professional associations, sports/recreational or hobby-related clubs, religious organizations, educational or school-related organizations, cultural or political organizations, as well as service clubs and other community groups.

Although immigrants as a whole have somewhat lower rates of social participation than the Canadian-born, they are within 10 percentage points of the national average when it comes to volunteering. They are only about 3 percentage points lower than the national average when it comes to charitable giving and civic participation. These findings are even more impressive when one considers that the stock of immigrants includes recent arrivals who may not yet have formed strong bonds of attachment to their new community, and who often must surmount language barriers to participate.

Chapter Six: Barriers to Integration

Macro Context

To maintain public support for the Immigration Program, immigration must maximize the economic and social benefits from the global movement of people, which means that supports need to be in place for the settlement, adaptation and integration of newcomers into Canadian society.

Growing shifts in source countries continue to mean an increasingly culturally diverse movement of peoples to Canada. Increasing, refugees are coming to Canada who may have experienced trauma and torture in their countries of origin. In 1999, 62.4% of immigrants landing in Canada settled in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, thereby straining social, education, housing and health services. There is also a potential for strains on social cohesion in larger centers that high levels of immigration might entail. These factors increase the complexity of delivering orientation and adaptation services as they currently exist, and in assisting newcomers in quickly becoming able to fully contribute to the social and economic aspects of life in Canada.

In addition to these more global factors, there are a number of indicators that can influence a newcomer's ability to integrate socially as well as economically. In addition to such variables as immigration status at landing⁷, length of time in Canada, and, in the case of refugees, length of time in first country of asylum, there are individual barriers,⁸ such as language and education, as well as systemic barriers,⁹ such as credential recognition and discrimination.

Language

Language ability is an important skill needed to obtain work and to integrate into society generally. Despite the high number of newcomers landing in Canada with higher levels of education and professional experience, recent studies indicate that, overall, newcomers are experiencing lower incomes and higher rates of poverty. CIC statistics show that most immigrants between 1996 and 1998 have come from countries where the official language was neither French nor English. The recent reality (1997-1999) is that more than 41% of immigrants speak neither English nor French upon landing.

⁷ The immigration category of a newcomer, whether a skilled worker, family class or refugee, will have an impact on how quickly a newcomer is able to integrate both economically and socially.

⁸ Individual barriers to integration are defined as changeable characteristics of individual immigrants such as education and language ability; the presence or absence of which interferes with the process of integration. It should be noted, however, that education and language ability at landing is not static, as immigrants may improve the level of either through training once in Canada.

⁹ Systemic barriers are defined as conditions or practices that prevail in Canada outside of the control of immigrants and interfere with the process of integration.

The economic performance¹⁰ of immigrants has been linked with their knowledge of one of Canada's official languages at arrival. In CIC studies investigating the economic behavior of immigrants landed in Canada between 1980 and 1995¹¹, researchers found that immigrants who declared knowledge of English or French or both Canadian official languages at landing report significantly higher employment earnings on average than other immigrants. After about seven years in Canada, they also generally report higher employment earnings than the Canadian average and show a lower incidence of unemployment insurance benefits.

The importance of language ability is demonstrated by the fact that for every landing year under study, skilled workers who received the maximum number of points for primary language ability not only started off earning higher employment incomes than skilled workers with poor or no language ability. They continued to earn higher incomes. Skilled workers coming to Canada without a reasonable command of an official language seem never to recover from this initial impediment to successful establishment. The income gap remains, and can be observed for people who have been in the labour market for a year or two or who have been working for 15 years.

These results may indicate that immigrants with little or no knowledge of Canada's official languages upon arrival are less likely to be able to function in their given occupation. Their lack of language skills may also funnel them into positions requiring lower education and skill levels than they actually possess. Coupled with the difficulties many immigrants experience having their foreign educational and professional credentials recognized, those with poor or no language ability often become permanently trapped in occupations which do not fully utilize their education and skills. In essence, the lack of language ability among some newcomers may limit their ability to realize their full potential.

Education

Research based on the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) shows that immigrants who landed with a university degree were employed at a higher rate than the Canadian average and received unemployment insurance and welfare payments at a lower rate than the Canadian average. On the other hand, immigrants who landed with a trade certification or lower levels of education had higher levels of unemployment, greater use of unemployment insurance and greater use of welfare transfers than the Canadian average.

¹⁰ The indicators of economic performance referred to within CIC research studies include the level of employment earnings, the incidence of unemployment insurance benefits and the incidence of social assistance payments.

¹¹ CIC is conducting a series of uni-dimensional immigrant profiles using the Longitudinal Immigrant Database (IMDB), which is a publicly available database maintained by Statistics Canada on behalf of a federal-provincial funding consortium headed by CIC.

While higher level of education is correlated positively with labour market success, that is not the complete picture. CIC research has confirmed that many immigrants with high education are not able to find employment that matches their skills and training. In fact, there has been significant erosion in earnings premiums paid to those with higher levels of education. For example, immigrant tax-filers who arrived in 1980 with a university degree reported employment earnings one full year later that were more than 20 percent above the Canadian average. Over time, however, the earnings premium for those with a university degree eroded such that by 1984, immigrants who landed the previous year reported earnings that were five percent below the Canadian average. By 1992, the initial earnings of immigrants with a university degree were 30 percent below the Canadian average.¹² This deterioration relative to the national level of employment earnings is evident for all levels of education, although it has been most pronounced among university graduates.¹³

Credentials Recognition

As previously suggested, recent immigrants are not always able to use their education fully. An analysis of recent immigrants in metropolitan areas conducted by CIC indicated that significant numbers of immigrants in possession of a bachelors degree were not employed in occupations that required a bachelors degree and were, in effect, underemployed. The most obvious condition of underemployment occurs when immigrants who have attained professional degrees or trade diplomas abroad are unable to work in their desired professions because their credentials are not accepted by Canadian regulatory bodies or employers.

It could be argued that the problem of credentials recognition in Canada is not necessarily solely an "immigrant" problem, given that regulatory bodies are provincially organized and as such, educational and occupational standards vary by province. Inter-provincial barriers can therefore produce labour mobility and labour market access challenges even for Canadian born professionals wishing to work in other provinces in their designated profession. Nevertheless, for foreign-trained professionals, the accreditation process presents considerably more challenges, especially given that no national body exists for the recognition of foreign degrees, professional accreditation and licensing.

The vicious cycle many immigrants are faced with is that employers do not hire foreign-trained professionals unless they have attained membership in appropriate professional associations while professional associations do not grant membership unless

¹² If the gap between the average earnings of recent immigrants and the Canadian average persists over time, it may suggest that more recent immigrants are not adapting to Canada's labour market in the same way that previous arrivals did as a result either of systemic or individual barriers. However, lower initial earnings and flatter growth in earnings may be more the result of economic conditions immigrants encountered upon arrival than a reflection of immigrant characteristics or their ability to succeed.

¹³ This observation may reflect structural changes in the labour market for new entrants, since younger Canadian workers and recent graduates are also experiencing difficulty obtaining employment and typically have lower employment earnings than workers from other age cohorts.

the individual applicant has some proven amount of Canadian work experience. The accreditation process is even more daunting for refugees who may have difficulty in presenting original certificates and other related documents as many of these documents may have already been destroyed or lost in the flight from refugee camps.

Another challenge is that prospective immigrants do not generally have access to high quality labour market information and accreditation procedures abroad. It has been suggested that the availability of such information would allow prospective immigrants to assess demand for their occupational skills and licensing requirements and make better choices as to their appropriate destination in Canada, as well as employment expectations.

There is also a lack of information for accreditors as to education systems abroad and work experience equivalencies. Uncertainties as to the merits of non-Canadian applicants, even when well documented, can lead to what has been deemed "statistical discrimination", so that the assessment process, itself, becomes biased, and:

- Often no credit is given for training received outside of an accredited program;
- Information gathering by some licensing bodies is unsystematic and guided by subjective and ad hoc standards;
- There is a frequent reluctance to give credit for relevant and well documented foreign experience;
- Some licensing tests do not meet standards for objective test development (validity and reliability) and are not consistent with the language needs of the profession;
- Prior learning assessment procedures sometimes are not adequate to the task of identifying retraining needs and such needs are misidentified;
- In some professions there is inadequate provision for administrative and judicial review of adverse decisions.

Work in Canada is proceeding under the auspices of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) to ensure that there is mutual recognition of credentials between provincial licensing bodies. Mutual recognition of assessments of prior learning is a continuing challenge that has been accepted by the growing network of credential assessment organizations in Canada, and one on which CIC is furthering action. CIC is committed to supporting the provinces and territories in their efforts to develop an infrastructure for the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials.

Discrimination

Canadians generally recognize the value of diversity and pride themselves in being a 'tolerant' nation. Canada is rooted in the values of openness, inclusion and mutual respect, and nation building requires the full inclusion and the active involvement of all Canadians. In committing itself to extending the principles of equal treatment and

Immigrant Integration in Canada

respect for diversity throughout the world, Canada ratified various United Nations treaties:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,
- International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* provides a legislative foundation for diversity, which is supported by other laws such as the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, the *Employment Equity Act*, the *Official Languages Act*, the *Pay Equity Act*, and the *Multiculturalism Act*. Federal legislation is reinforced through a web of provincial, territorial and municipal legislation. Additionally, Canada has policies and programs intended to facilitate the acceptance of and respect for the laws. Most of these policies deal with notions of awareness, understanding, acceptance, access, participation and equality.

Nevertheless, problems of discrimination and racism do exist. While public perceptions and underlying social attitudes are difficult to directly ascertain through opinion surveys, intolerance based on race or ethnicity can have a negative impact on integration outcomes for immigrants such as access to employment and employment progression, access to housing and quality of life.

While not all immigrants are visible minorities, over half of the immigrants who arrived since the 1970s, and three-quarters of those who came in the 1990s, are members of a visible minority group. In 1996, Canada was home to 3.2 million people who identified themselves as members of a visible minority. They represented 11.2 percent of Canada's total population, up from 9.4 percent in 1991 and 6.3 percent in 1986. About 7 out of every 10 individuals identified as visible minorities were immigrants, and the rest were born in Canada. As immigrant source countries have shifted from Europe and Great Britain to Asia, the Middle East and Africa, the proportion of non-European immigrants has increased accordingly. This trend is reflected in demographic trends in Canada as a whole and in the major cities in particular, where immigrants tend to settle. It is projected that “visible minorities” will constitute 20% of the Canadian population by 2016. Visible minorities currently account for 32%, 31%, 15%, 14%, and 12% in Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Montreal, respectively.

Discrimination based on race may be detected objectively by studies that control for such variables as education, experience, immigrant status and gender and then examine earnings differentials. Any unexplained gap in the earnings of visible minorities is then attributed to discrimination. Studies have suggested that there is a significant negative earnings gap for immigrants of color. The most serious results of workplace discrimination barriers faced by employment equity designated groups in recent years include under-representation of designated groups,¹⁴ slow career progression, lower job

¹⁴ The Employment Equity Act (1996) governs public sector departments and agencies, federally regulated employers in the private sector, and Crown Corporations with one hundred or more employees. The

retention, concentration in lower status occupational groups, higher unemployment rates, and lower average earnings.

The credentials discrimination discussed above can potentially have a detrimental effect on race relations and social cohesion. When groups of individuals from particular ethnic or racial backgrounds are denied access into the trades or professions there can be an accumulated societal effect of higher levels of inter-group tensions, individual and collective alienation as well as generalized perceptions about "institutional" discrimination. Additionally, if, by being denied access to the labour market, immigrants are unable to fully contribute economically to Canadian society, it becomes difficult to demonstrate to the average Canadian the benefits of immigration. As such, there is potential for negative impacts on public perceptions and attitudes towards immigration.

Absorptive Capacity

The concept of absorptive capacity involves a number of complex factors, and it generally refers to Canada's ability to successfully accept and integrate newcomers with minimum disruption to the country's economic and social fabric. Ultimately, absorptive capacity is related to issues around social cohesion at the community level. Traditional notions of 'absorptive capacity' have focused on Canada's changing population needs, short-term labour market conditions, and social attitudes. Immigration, however, is not just about numbers. Questions that look at 'what kind' of immigrants and 'where and how' they settle are just as important in looking at absorptive capacity, as are questions about 'how many' are admitted.

Immigration to Canada is increasingly concentrated in particular provinces and urban centers, resulting in an uneven distribution of population growth. Since the early 1980s, the share of immigrants going to the smaller provinces and to Québec has declined, while the number of newcomers destined for Ontario and British Columbia has risen. Generally, Canada's four largest provinces now receive over 95 percent of the current immigration flow. Over half of the newcomers admitted each year are destined for Ontario, more than 20 percent settle in British Columbia, roughly 12 to 13 percent settle in Québec, and between 6 to 8 percent settle in Alberta.

Immigration is also an increasingly urban phenomenon. In 1997, nearly three-quarters of all immigrants were destined for the metropolitan areas of Toronto (45 percent), Vancouver (19 percent), and Montréal (10 percent). Patterns of secondary migration among immigrants also reinforce the trend towards settlement in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montréal. This would seem to indicate that even when small and medium-sized cities succeed in initially attracting immigrants, many newcomers soon

purpose of the Act is to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability. In the fulfilment of that goal, policy measures seek to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and member of visible minorities.

gravitate to the larger and more established immigrant communities in Canada's three largest cities.

Within today's immigrant flow are very diverse populations with varying backgrounds and experiences. For example, family class immigrants may be motivated by rather different push and pull factors than economic immigrants. Government-assisted and privately-sponsored refugees must be distinguished from in-Canada refugee claimants. People of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds may have very different settlement patterns and therefore may have very different integration needs. The changing flow has significant implications for society and for social infrastructure and services at the national, provincial, and municipal levels.

Different parts of the country face different challenges. Some provinces, territories, and municipalities want and need a significant influx of newcomers to fill skill shortages in particular industries, ensure continued economic expansion, or prevent rural depopulation. Others face challenges in delivering services due to relatively high volumes and concentrations of immigrants and refugees. One irony is that often areas that desire increased immigration have the most difficulty attracting newcomers. A challenge for all governments is to find innovative ways to encourage immigrants to settle in 'non-traditional' destinations—keeping in mind that the mobility rights enshrined in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* permit newcomers to move to wherever they wish to live in Canada.¹⁵ In practice, attempts to direct newcomers to settle in particular areas have proven ineffective, since most eventually gravitate to large urban centers where job opportunities and support from their own ethno-cultural community are often more readily available. The consequence of this need has been an increasing concentration of new arrivals in the country's major urban centers. The added pressure being placed on infrastructure by these new arrivals may overshadow the benefits that they bring with them to these cities.

High concentration of immigrants in urban areas can have an impact on social cohesion, as it may impact public attitudes and perceptions. When an influx of newcomers changes the character of a particular community, some residents may feel threatened and overwhelmed or excluded and ignored. Others will welcome the new ideas, experiences, and cultural activities that newcomers bring. Attitudes may depend on whether newcomers share the same language, religion, and culture of the resident population. Whether they are concentrated or dispersed in a particular neighborhood, and whether the influx affects access to, and the quality of, institutional services like schools and hospitals may also impact the public environment. Other contributing factors are whether newcomers find jobs easily and contribute to the economy, and perceptions of how immigrants affect the opportunities of other residents.

¹⁵ Charter restrictions do not permit the immigration program to determine the area of destination for immigrants to ensure that they locate where they may best meet different economic or demographic objectives. While CIC is able to destine refugees selected abroad to particular areas, they have freedom of movement once in Canada.

Chapter Seven: Defining Success -- Measuring Integration Outcomes

At present, there is little consensus on a definition of integration or on an appropriate set of indicators. Such a consensus would require agreement on the interpretation of policy and program objectives, suitable benchmarks, anticipated directions, and the degree of change that would signal success or failure. Some question whether it is even appropriate to compare immigrants to the Canadian-born population. Others point out that society may have very different expectations for refugees than for other categories of immigrants. People from different ethno-cultural backgrounds have different patterns of integration. Some seem to adapt rapidly to their new environment, while for others the process can take up to three generations.

Contributions Accountability Framework

We cannot make informed decisions without solid research and data. To address this situation, CIC is currently developing a Contributions Accountability Framework in order to provide the department with the data collection and analysis capacity needed to measure results and outcomes.¹⁶ This information will then be used to inform policy and program development. Reports derived from the performance measurement system and broader program evaluations will give us a better indication of whether we are meeting the needs of newcomers. CIC will be better positioned to ascertain whether there are more efficient or effective ways of achieving the same results, and how to further counter the barriers faced by immigrants.

CIC began to implement a Contribution Accountability Framework (CAF) once the Settlement Renewal initiative to devolve programming to provinces was brought to a close in March 1999. The CAF will help ensure the accountability of departmental expenditures, monitor service delivery and evaluate the effectiveness of contribution programs in meeting the settlement needs of newcomers. The five components of the CAF are:

1. Performance Measurement
2. Evaluation
3. Contribution Agreement Process
4. Management Control Framework
5. Provincial/Territorial Accountability

¹⁶ On June 1, 2000, Treasury Board published *Results for Canadians: A Management Framework for the Government of Canada*. This report provides for a revised policy on grants and contributions, which requires that departments demonstrate a results-based accountability framework. These frameworks are expected to include performance indicators, expected results and outcomes, and evaluation criteria to be used in assessing the effectiveness of programs. The objective is to ensure the sound management of grants and contributions.

Together, these five elements will allow CIC to demonstrate its responsible stewardship of funds spent on contribution programs for immigrants and refugees.

Performance Measurement will be the primary focus of CIC's work for the 2000-2002 fiscal year, and will continue on into the future. The four contribution programs covered under this initiative include the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program, the Host Program and the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). Staff resources are expected to be concentrated in working collaboratively with service providers and key stakeholders in developing and implementing a data collection system.

The goal is to develop and implement a performance measurement system based on standardised indicators that will provide consistent and reliable data, collected through a system that connects to existing databases without creating an added burden to SPOs. Because a well-designed system will likely take more than one or two years to fully implement, CIC has taken interim measures to determine and report on performance at a national level. SPOs are asked to supply a small amount of aggregate service data every three months, to be reported quarterly, using pre-set templates. This data will enable CIC to manually compile a rudimentary picture of settlement and refugee service performance at the local, provincial, regional and national level. This method will eventually be replaced by the more efficient and effective data collection system currently under development.

Beginning in the 2002-03 fiscal year, efforts will be focused on the qualitative evaluation side of program assessment. This will entail precise program evaluation frameworks, looking at such items as service quality, client satisfaction, program design factors and short-term impact. One important evaluative research method available to CIC is the linking of client and program output data (approved use of identifiers such as name, gender, date of birth, country of origin, mother tongue, immigrant category and client identifier number) with existing data sources on landed immigrants. The link is an efficient way to analyse immigrant profiles, access longitudinal immigrant economic performance and mobility, and determine the possible impact settlement services might have had on key variables.

The *Contribution Agreement Process* aims at developing and implementing consistent, comparable contribution relationships between CIC and SPOs. Decisions about information required for accountability, training of staff in CIC and SPOs, and standard forms and formats should lead to stronger, consistent performance outputs. The *Management Control Framework* will aim to define and support good administrative practices, consistent across the Department, for offices that deal with the contribution programs. These practices include staff training, monitoring and auditing.

Provincial/Territorial Accountability refers to the special arrangements for those parts of the country (British Columbia, Manitoba and Québec) that accept transfers of funds and manage the programs themselves. The intention is to have reasonably comparable services across the country, coupled with comparable information to contribute to national analysis of programs trends and needs.

Research

In addition to the development of performance measurement systems and evaluative frameworks for our settlement and integration programs, research remains an important tool for informing the policy-making context. While research cannot provide definitive answers to all questions, immigration outcomes can be measured indirectly by examining a range of economic and social indicators. These indicators may confirm that government policy and programs are contributing to intended results, or point to other factors that may be influencing the ultimate outcome.

An important tool for CIC is the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) which matches data gathered from the record of landing (i.e. age, gender, citizenship, category of admission, official language ability, level of education, intended occupation, etc.) to data from the personal income tax returns that the individual may subsequently file. The IMDB currently provides detailed data on adult immigrant and refugee tax-filers who obtained permanent resident status in Canada between 1980 and 1995. It allows policy-makers to analyze the relative labour market performance of individual newcomers over time, and to compare their performance with a Canadian average. It also allows policy-makers to evaluate the relative success of selection criteria on an aggregate level. Since the IMDB does not provide data on families and households, or measure the skills, education, and language ability that immigrants and refugees acquire after landing, Census data are also used to analyze their economic performance.

One of the most significant advantages of the IMDB is its ability to link the economic performance of immigrants and refugees to some of their characteristics at arrival, such as their category of admission. As a result, we can now confirm what many academic and policy researchers have long suspected: there are a number of factors that consistently serve as indicators of an individual's likelihood to succeed economically. As one might expect, immigrants who are selected for their transferable skills adapt more quickly to a changing labour market and are ultimately less dependent on government transfers like Unemployment Insurance and social assistance.

Metropolis

Traditionally, there has been little research on the social impact of immigration on communities or on the longer-term implications for Canadian society. In this respect, the work of the Metropolis Project and its Centers of Excellence is very encouraging. This venture seeks to create co-operative partnerships between government, academic policy researchers and non-governmental organizations examining immigrant integration and the effects of international migration on urban centers. As an international forum for comparative research and public policy development about population migration, cultural diversity and the challenges of immigrant integration in cities in Canada and around the world, the goal is to improve policies for managing migration and cultural diversity in major cities. In Canada, the Metropolis Project is built upon partnerships between all levels of government, academic researchers and community organizations in four Centers of Excellence.¹⁷ The international arm of the Project involves partnerships with policy-makers and researchers from over 20 countries, including the United States, most of Western Europe, Israel and Argentina and from the Asia-Pacific region.

Research generated through Metropolis has been extremely useful in generating discussion and policy recommendations for government around issues such as needs of immigrant and refugee children/youth and older newcomers, ethno-specific groups, urban issues around absorptive capacity, credentials recognition and other labour market barriers, as well as capacity issues for delivering settlement services in smaller cities and rural communities. Metropolis conferences at the national and international level also provide opportunities for sharing promising practices, and are informative in demonstrating where our programs are working and where we need more work. Additionally, the Metropolis web-site at canada.metropolis.net lists hundreds of studies undertaken to date.

¹⁷ The four Centers of Excellence in Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS) are located in Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, and Montréal. The creation of a fifth center in Halifax is currently under development.

Chapter Eight: Future Directions

Potential Interventions

In order to address the language, labour market, discrimination and absorptive capacity barriers addressed above, CIC is pursuing a number of avenues. Work is underway investigating ways that we might enhance existing settlement and integration programs, particularly to meet labour market and language needs. While we feel our programs are comprehensive in their scope and target many of the immediate and ongoing settlement and integration needs of newcomers, preliminary research findings as well as anecdotal evidence tells us that there are some gaps in current programming.

LINC currently does not meet the needs of newcomers needing language skills past basic social interaction levels. While basic levels may be sufficient in many cases for newcomers that arrive as family class dependants for instance, CIC would like to do more, particularly for those arriving in the skilled worker category. There is a need for higher levels of LINC training and occupational based language training. There is also a need for employment bridging mechanisms and programs that would provide more than the basic resume writing and job finding clubs currently available through ISAP. CIC is currently exploring a number of development options such as comprehensive needs-assessments, access to information tools, career-bridging workshops and mentoring/internship programs that would need to be developed in partnership with other federal government departments. The development of in-school settlement supports such as in-school settlement workers and peer mentoring homework clubs and language buddies, through both ISAP and Host, are also being explored to meet the unmet needs of newcomer children and youth who, in 1999, made up roughly 36% of newcomers landing in Canada.

On the issue of credentials recognition, CIC continues to co-chair the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Access to Professions and Trades, which also includes representatives from the Federal Departments of Canadian Heritage and Human Resources Development Canada. This working group was instrumental in developing and implementing the 1999 conference on access to professions and trades, "Qualifications Recognition in the 21st Century", that included participation by immigrants, provinces, other federal government departments, provincial regulatory bodies and associations, and employers. As a follow up to the conference, CIC will continue to encourage the expansion of credential assessment services and work with the provinces to provide more information to clients abroad on credential assessments services and links to professional and trade associations. CIC and HRDC will develop a web-site for stakeholders to share information and best practices. We will also continue to support provincial initiatives to develop standards for quality assessment and the portability of credentials within and from outside Canada.

CIC is also working to combat workplace discrimination by adopting recruitment objectives that correspond with employment equity legislation, such as actively participating in employment equity job-fairs, and ensuring that employees participate in diversity awareness training. We have also introduced a new initiative to promote diversity within the Federal Public Service. The initiative is a partnership between CIC and the Public Service Commission (PSC) to promote careers in the federal public service to new citizens at citizenship ceremonies. Each new citizen will receive a letter of congratulations from the Clerk of the Privy Council with an invitation to consider a career in the federal public service. PSC Recruitment Brochures will also be made available. It is felt that this initiative will help to achieve the goal set out in the 2001 Throne Speech, to "ensure that the Public Service is innovative, dynamic and reflective of the diversity of the country...able to attract and develop the talent to serve Canadians in the 21st century".

On the issue of absorptive capacity and urban settlement patterns, CIC is currently undertaking research related to measures to encourage dispersion. With an increasing concentration of immigrants, it is becoming more difficult for large urban centers to meet the needs of immigrants. At the same time, smaller provinces and urban centers wish to attract immigrants in order to boost or maintain their population base as well as to contribute to their economic development, through specific skills and expertise. While the objective to alleviate pressures for settlement services in the large urban centers is uniquely related to newcomers, the concerns of smaller provinces and cities result largely from the exodus of their native-born populations to the larger urban centers. Smaller provinces and cities have their own challenges in maintaining a stable and qualified labour force to promote their own social and economic objectives.

The challenge, therefore, is to adopt a strategy that will encourage the permanent settlement and integration of newcomers outside of the major metropolitan areas of Canada. Key factors in the successful application of this strategy would include: the availability of employment; the development of a community infrastructure; cultural issues acknowledgement and sensitivity; and the proximity to a metropolitan center which provides access to services, same-ethnic communities and their goods.

Conclusion

The 1990s have been a period of rapid social and economic change in Canada and around the world. Multiple and complex changes in the policy and program environment and in the flow of international migrants make it difficult to isolate and measure the impacts of immigration and to evaluate outcomes like our ability to successfully integrate newcomers. Clearly, there are many factors that influence assessments of our absorptive capacity and the determination of annual immigration levels.

Many of the broad social, economic, and demographic effects that are slow to express themselves at the national level can be very pronounced at the local level. For this reason, conclusions about the national impact or significance of immigration grossly underestimate the real impacts felt in Canada's largest urban areas. Immigration is not just about nation building—more and more, it is about community building. For this reason, it may be particularly useful for discussions to focus on Canada's major urban centers and not just on the overall numbers and the absorptive capacity of Canada as a whole.

Recognizing the positive benefits that immigrants bring to Canada, there is much that we still need to learn about absorptive capacity and the impact of immigration at the micro level. What are the impacts of immigration and population growth on urban planning and sustainable development? Research alone cannot answer these questions. Solutions will depend greatly on our ability to work collaboratively with our partners at various levels to continue to remain cognisant of and to address the integration barriers outlined above. In order to maintain public support for the Immigration Program as a whole, it remains a necessary priority for CIC to continue to assess what is working and where we can do more. We need to continue to explore opportunities to fully address any unmet needs of newcomers to Canada in order to ensure their successful settlement and integration into Canadian society.